ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE   09410511

A Max Sessions Server (MSS) automatically detects hardware and communications failures. Upon detection, counters are adjusted accordingly to

5   maintain an accurate count of users or groups of users on a system. A database of unique identifiers for each connection is maintained, where the unique identifier is a concatenation of a Network Access Server (NAS) and the connection's incoming NAS node number. If a user requests permission to log into the system, the MSS first checks the database to determine if the unique identifier is already logged in.

10   If so, then a hardware or communications failure has occurred and the MSS must make the appropriate adjustments to the database and counter. Additionally, the MSS or an authentication, authorization and accounting (AAA) server will periodically check to determine if an NAS has ceased communicating over a particular length of time and relay any failures to the MSS. If the NAS has

15   experienced a hardware or communications failure, then the MSS must make the appropriate adjustments to the database and counters for all sessions logged in from the failed NAS. Finally, the MSS may broadcast the failure to all MSSs associated with the NAS on the system.

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